



Commonwealth of Virginia

Walter J. Kucharski, Auditor

**Auditor of Public Accounts
P.O. Box 1295
Richmond, Virginia 23218**

December 6, 2002

The Honorable G. Richard Beck
Chief Judge
County of Powhatan General District Court
35 E. Tabb Street
Petersburg, VA 23803

The Honorable James E. Hume
Chief Judge
County of Powhatan Juvenile and
Domestic Relations District Court
27 E. Tabb Street
Petersburg, VA 23803

As part of our audit of the Virginia District Court System, we have audited the cash receipts and disbursements of the County of Powhatan District Court for the period July 1, 2001 through September 30, 2002.

Our primary objectives were to test the accuracy of financial transactions recorded on the Court's financial management system; evaluate the Court's internal controls; and test its compliance with significant state laws, regulations, and policies. However, our audit was more limited than would be necessary to provide assurance on the internal controls or on overall compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

The results of our tests found the Court properly stated, in all material respects, the amounts recorded and reported in the financial management system; and no instances of noncompliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. However, we noted a weakness in internal controls that the Clerk needs to address as described below.

Properly Control Security Access

The Clerk improperly shares her assigned system access user identification with a family member that volunteers in her office. As a result, the Clerk cannot maintain personal accountability over data entry into her automated systems. The Clerk should immediately discontinue sharing access to ensure that she can provide adequate control over her automated systems.

MAGISTRATE ISSUES:

The results of our tests found the Magistrate properly stated, in all material respects, the amounts recorded and reported in the financial records; and no instances of noncompliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. However, we noted a weakness in internal controls that the Chief Magistrate needs to address as described below.

The Honorable G. Richard Beck
The Honorable James E. Hume
December 6, 2002
Page Two

Reconcile Magistrate Bank Records

Magistrate Wood does not reconcile his bank account as required in Chapter X of the Magistrate's Manual. Failure to reconcile the bank account can lead to errors and irregularities going undetected. The Magistrate should properly reconcile his bank account monthly to include documenting the reconciliation process and identifying and adjusting any reconciling items promptly.

We discussed these comments with the Clerk and the Magistrate on December 6, 2002 and we acknowledge the cooperation extended to us by the Court during this engagement.

AUDITOR OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

WJK/cam

cc: The Honorable Garland L. Bigley, Judge
The Honorable Valentine W. Southall, Jr., Judge,
Gloria M. Blankenship, Clerk
Sherry Grizzard, Chief Magistrate
Don Lucido, Director of Technical Assistance
Supreme Court of Virginia
LeAnn Lane, Court Analyst
Supreme Court of Virginia